



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

New Mexico Division

July 21, 2016

4001 Office Court Drive
Suite 801
Santa Fe, NM 87507
505-820-2021

In Reply Refer To:
PPM-NM
ENVI 3

**SUBJECT: Sunport Boulevard Extension CN A300160
And Woodward Road CN A300161 Environmental Documents**

Mr. Tom Church
Cabinet Secretary
New Mexico Department of Transportation
PO Box 1149
Santa Fe, NM 87507

Dear Secretary Church:

The Federal Highway Administration New Mexico Division Office (Division) has received and reviewed the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents for the Bernalillo County subject projects. The Sunport Boulevard Extension project was analyzed as an Environmental Assessment (EA) for its NEPA consideration, and Bernalillo County via the New Mexico Department of Transportation (Department), has requested a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the project. The Woodward Road project was analyzed as a Categorical Exclusion (CE), and final signature from the Division has been requested. The Woodward Road project is discussed as a "co-dependent" project in the Sunport Boulevard Extension EA and noted as an environmental commitment that would be developed as a separate project to be open to traffic prior to the completion of the Sunport Boulevard Extension.

The Division's review of the FONSI request concluded that producing individual projects with separate NEPA documents constitutes a segmentation issue. Segmentation in this respect pertains to an evaluation of the Sunport Boulevard Extension project and its relationship to the Woodward project. Individual NEPA documents for the Sunport Boulevard Extension project and the Woodward Road project is construed as incrementally analyzing impacts materially linked to both projects.

Ultimately, the Division is unable to approve the NEPA decision documents based on the segmentation considerations relative to NEPA procedural requirements. The Division proposes that the information in the Woodward Road CE be combined with the Sunport Boulevard Extension EA and be presented to the public as a single EA at a public hearing. Planning requirements would also call for amending the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to reflect a single project. Several options exist for consideration, as we discussed during the project meeting on Monday, July 18, 2016. Among these options include: pursuing a single

EA as proposed in the preceding paragraph, elevating the NEPA level of effort to an Environmental Impact Statement, or withdrawing the project altogether.

The Division acknowledges the critical link that the Sunport Boulevard Extension comprises in the Interstate 25 South Corridor. We are committed to working with you and Bernalillo County to evaluate the corridor and advance solutions. If you have questions on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the Division Environmental/Realty Specialist, Greg Heitmann. He can be reached via email at greg.heitmann@dot.gov or by phone at (505) 820-2027.

Sincerely,



Gregory L. Heitmann
Environmental Specialist

For: J. Don Martinez
Division Administrator

cc:

Mr. Blake Roxlau, Environmental Program Manager, NMDOT

Mr. Ken Murphy, P.E., Acting District 3 Engineer, NMDOT

Ms. Priscilla Benavidez, P.E., District 3 Design Manager, NMDOT